

# NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER  
**PAUL KORETZ**  
FIFTH DISTRICT



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## City of LA Appoints World's First Climate Emergency Mobilization Office Director Environmental Justice Leader Marta Segura

*On the heels of dire climate report warning of danger to human survival  
CEMO Lead Author Councilmember Paul Koretz Announces CEMO Appointment*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**January 25, 2021 - Los Angeles, CA** – Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz was pleased to announce that Marta Segura, longtime environmental justice leader, has been hired as Director of the world's first Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO). The CEMO was initially launched by City Councilmembers Paul Koretz and Bob Blumenfield, in a unique partnership with the Leap LA Coalition and a citywide alliance of allies. It is designed with environmental justice at its core to address both toxic neighborhood pollution and climate emissions by engaging leadership from frontline, Indigenous and labor communities who are already being most negatively impacted. After a rigorous interview process involving community groups and Council offices, C40 Chair and Climate Mayors founder, Mayor Eric Garcetti, announced his hiring decision.

"The Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO) was created to respond to the worldwide climate crisis, and the hope that, in the short time we have to turn this disaster around, we can take dramatic steps and provide leadership not only in our own City, but as an example others can again follow beyond our borders," **said CEMO lead author City Councilmember Paul Koretz.** "In short, we need to mobilize."

Upon LA's initial announcement of the CEMO effort, the Berkeley City Council was inspired to formally declare a "climate emergency," followed by others around the Bay area, then London, England, followed by a cascade and then an avalanche of over 1860 municipalities around the world in only a couple of years.

Human survival is at extreme risk from climate breakdown and mass biodiversity loss, indicated a report released last week in *Frontiers in Conservation Science*, which details that the planet is in a much worse state than even scientists understand and we are facing a "ghastly future of mass extinction, declining health and climate-disruption upheavals." NASA recently announced that 2020 is tied with 2016 for the hottest year ever. Recent climate-exacerbated disasters include: more record-breaking wildfire and hurricane seasons, and an extreme wind storm called a derecho that destroyed farmland from Iowa to Ohio. In addition to lives, homes and businesses lost or ruined, all these disasters are costing taxpayers tens of billions of dollars and counting. According to a recent UN report, more than a million species are at risk of extinction within decades.

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Councilmember Paul Koretz  
200 North Spring Street, Room 440  
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“The climate crisis isn’t a distant question, but an everyday reality for families, households, businesses, workers, and frontline communities across Los Angeles — and our Climate Emergency Mobilization Office will be a source of solutions for this generational challenge,” **said Mayor Garcetti**. “With a proven leader like Marta taking the reins, our City will stay focused on the core promises of our vision: greater equity, lower emissions, a thriving economy, and a zero-carbon, green-energy future.”

“The CEMO was formed in a unique partnership with the Leap LA Coalition to address the urgent need to mobilize all sectors of the City with leadership from the most impacted frontline, Indigenous and labor communities to address the imminent threats to human health, safety and the very habitability of our planet,” **Councilmember Koretz also said**. “I appreciate the support from my climate-focused colleagues: Council President Nury Martinez, CEMO co-author Councilmember Bob Blumenfield, Budget Chair Councilmember Paul Krekorian, and Mayor Garcetti, and very much look forward to working with the talented Marta Segura.”

“Climate change remains the most critical existential crisis facing humanity and we must continue to implement systemic change in all levels of government,” **said CEMO co-author, Councilmember Bob Blumenfield**. “I’m proud to stand with Councilmember Koretz and take this big step in creating a new office that will help us continue to actualize our bold climate goals.”

“I am humbled and honored to serve as the City’s first Climate Emergency Mobilization Director. Now is the time to work together, with every community and every neighborhood, so we can plan and create the city we want,” **said new CEMO Director, Marta Segura**. “We will collaborate with policymakers and community leaders to create opportunities for all families and workers to build thriving, healthy communities for all Angelenos while we strive to be a model for other cities. I’m thrilled to roll up my sleeves and get to work.”

The CEMO will be overseen by a Climate Emergency Commission, appointed from among the communities mentioned, and one of the first tasks of the Director will be to initiate Community Assemblies to engage leadership from those communities.

**The Leap LA Coalition said jointly**: “The Leap LA Coalition applauds the hiring of the City of LA’s first Climate Emergency Mobilization Office Director. Having worked closely with Councilmember Koretz and the Mayor’s Office to institutionalize an intersectional, community-led approach to achieving climate justice, we look forward to working in partnership with incoming Director, Marta Segura, to enact community-driven solutions to our climate crisis.” [The Leap LA Coalition includes: Communities for a Better Environment, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles, Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE), and Pacoima Beautiful].

“This long awaited announcement means we can keep moving community driven solutions that will benefit communities most burdened by pollution, poverty and racism. This office will ensure that community innovation and knowledge are central to finding equity and justice based solutions to climate change,” **said Martha Dina Arguello, Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles**.

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“We look forward to working with the Climate Emergency Mobilization Director and office to uplift community voices and build long-standing solutions rooted in Just Recovery,” **said Laura Gracia, Climate Adaptation and Resilience Enhancement (CARE) Coordinator, Communities for a Better Environment.**

“For far too long, front line communities have borne the brunt of climate impacts and exposure to environmental toxins, without having a decision-making role or an opportunity to be part of an organized effort to develop just solutions. Only by centering their voices, can we achieve a true just transition and just recovery that benefits everyone,” **said Nancy Halpern Ibrahim, Executive Director of Esperanza Community Housing Corporation.** “We welcome and look forward to working with the new Director of the Climate Emergency Mobilization Department toward racial justice.”

“Marta Segura’s expertise in public health, frontline communities of color, and private philanthropy provide the tools needed for the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance and community stakeholders’ fight against the climate crisis in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles,” **said Ernesto Hidalgo (Chair) and Lisa Hart, from the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance steering board.**

"As a Leap LA ally and supporter, 5 Gyres is thrilled to see Los Angeles taking bold initiative to promote climate equity, and recognize that our climate crisis must be solved by centering front and fenceline voices, **said Anna Cummins, Executive Director, The 5 Gyres Institute.** “The Climate Emergency Mobilization Office in Los Angeles sets an important precedent for other cities, addressing the many, interrelated impacts of climate change - from public health, to air quality, to a just transition for frontline workers - and ensures a more equitable process for decision-making.”

Media Contacts:

Alison Simard, Director of Comm. Councilmember Koretz, [Alison.Simard@lacity.org](mailto:Alison.Simard@lacity.org), (213) 505-7467 (cell)

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